

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 04614 242325Z

11

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 EA-11 DRC-01 /127 W

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R 241800Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6998

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 4614

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR (JUAN DOMINGO PERON)

SUBJ: SPECULATION REGARDING PERON'S HEALTH

REF: BA 4587

1. SUMMARY: THERE IS NO CONVINCING EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT PRESIDENT PERON IS, IN FACT, SERIOUSLY ILL AS SOME REPORTS AND RUMORS HAVE INDICATED. HOWEVER, NON-CONCLUSIVE FACT THAT PERON CANCELLED AUDIENCE FOR AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE DOES INDICATE THERE MAY BE MORE TO PERON'S "MINOR COLD" THAN GOA WOULD HAVE PUBLIC BELIEVE. END SUMMARY.

2. WE WERE INFORMED BY AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY OVER THE WEEKEND THAT OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY HAD INDICATED AUSTRALIAN FONMIN WILLESEE'S CALL ON PRESIDENT PERON MORNING OF JUNE 24 WOULD DEPEND UPON WHETHER OR NOT PERON HAD SUFFICIENTLY RECOVERED FROM HIS COLD BY THEN. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY CALLED THIS MORNING (JUN 24) TO SAY WILLESEE'S AUDIENCE WITH PERON HAD BEEN CANCELLED AT LAST MINUTE. AUSTRALIANS ATTACH LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE TO CANCELLATION AND HAVE EVIDENCED NO SUSPICION THAT IT RESULTS FROM ANYTHING OTHER THAN BAD COLD.

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3. GOA MADE MUCH OF FACT THAT PERON REPORTEDLY CHAIRED

CABINET MEETING ON MORNING OF JUNE 21. EMBASSY SOURCES WHO HAVE SPOKEN TO ATTENDEES ARE CONVINCED THAT PERON IN FACT DID CHAIR THE MEETING. WE NOTE THAT PRESS WAS NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE PICTURES OF CABINET IN SESSION AS HAS USUALLY BEEN THE CASE.

4. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT LOPEZ REGA RETURNED FROM EUROPE TO PROTECT HIS POLITICAL FLANKS RATHER THAN BECAUSE OF PERONS HEALTH. FURTHER WE ARE NOT YET PREPARED TO CONCLUDE THAT PERON HAS HAD SERIOUS RELAPSE OR ANYTHING OTHER THAN A COLD WITH SOME POSSIBLE RESPIRATORY COMPLICATIONS. HOWEVER CANCELLATION OF WILLESEES INTERVIEW IS A PIECE OF EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THE CONTRARY. WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO EXPLORE SUBJECT MORE FULLY WITH ADDITIONAL SOURCES.
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30 JUN 2005

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